



**Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity**

For Immediate Release

August 1, 2016

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Illinois Hosts National Governors Association Annual Workforce Development Meeting

National Associations of State Workforce Board Chairs and State Liaisons for Workforce Development gather in Chicago to discuss talent pipeline

CHICAGO – This week, the Illinois Department of Commerce Office of Employment and Training hosts the National Governors Association's 2016 summer annual meeting of the National Association of State Workforce Board Chairs and the National Association of State Liaisons for Workforce Development Partnerships in Chicago. The two associations will meet, separately and jointly, to discuss strategies for building the United States' talent pipeline to support a competitive workforce. Illinois was selected to host this year's meeting because of its nationally recognized workforce development and training system.

"Illinois is honored to host state workforce board chairs and liaisons from across the country to discuss strategies for keeping our nation's workforce competitive," Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner said. "Companies want to come to Illinois because we have the best workers, we are centrally located and we are a transportation hub for America. We must continue exploring new ways to grow our economy and keep our workforce competitive in order to compete in the global, twenty-first century economy."

"Economic prosperity begins in the states," National Governors Association (NGA) Executive Director and CEO Scott Pattison said. "NGA thanks Gov. Rauner for hosting this event that brings together workforce development experts from across the country to discuss state-level innovation providing people with the skills and opportunities they need to succeed."

In addition to discussing the future of the American workforce system, decreasing barriers to employment, and how to meet the goals of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) such as increased collaboration with employers and improved work-based training, attendees will tour the Digital Manufacturing and Design Innovation Institute, Fort Knox Studios and Instituto Del Progreso Latino.

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Under WIOA, the Illinois Department of Commerce has provided on-the-job training to over 10,000 participants, helping to retrain workers and avert potential layoffs, as well as provided training for veterans and dislocated workers to assist with new employment.

Additionally, the state's Accelerated Training for Illinois Manufacturing (ATIM) initiative has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor for surpassing its enrollment goals and achieving a jobseeker participation rate of over 90 percent. Furthermore, Illinois is a national model for "Employment First" and workplace integration of employees with disabilities. "Employment First" prioritizes employment as a first choice for individuals living with disabilities. Finally, Illinois is a leader in bridge programs for immigrants and low-skilled adults.

The National Association of State Workforce Board Chairs will meet July 31 through August 3, and the National Association of State Liaisons for Workforce Development Partnerships will meet August 2 – 5.

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